GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:216
ANSWERED ON:18.02.2009
KILLING OF INNOCENT TAMILS IN SRI LANKA
Chandrappan Shri C.K.;Das Gupta Shri Gurudas;Gaikwad Shri Eknath Mahadeo;Mane Smt. Nivedita;Pandey Dr. Laxminarayan;Rijiju Shri Kiren;Yaskhi Shri Madhu Goud

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether innocent Tamil people are being killed in the ongoing armed conflict between Sri Lankan Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of India has taken up this issue with the Sri Lankan Government during the recent visit ofExternal Affairs Minister to Sri Lanka;

(d) if so,the details thereof alongwith other issues discussed during the visit;and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure the safety of the civilian Tamil people living in Sri Lanka?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.216 REGARDING `KILLING OF INNOCENT TAMILS IN SRI LANKA` FOR ANSWER ON 18.02.2009

Government of India is closely monitoring the ongoing conflict in Northern Sri Lanka and its impact on the humanitarian situation of the civilians and Internally Displaced Persons.

External Affairs Minister of India visited Sri Lanka on 27th January 2009.His discussions covered the entire gamut of bilateral relations and regional issues of mutual interest.He also took up India`s concerns for the safety, security and welfare of the civilians with President Mahinda Rajapaksa. He emphasized the need for the Sri Lankan Government to give an opportunity for the civilians and internally displaced persons to come out of the LTTE held areas. He was assured that the Government of Sri Lanka would take all necessary measures to minimize the effects of the conflict on Tamil civilians including providing uninterrupted relief supplies,respecting and expanding safe zones and preventing civilian casualties. Subsequently, on 29th January 2009, President Rajapaksa announced a 48 hour period for civilians to leave the conflict zone,appealed to the LTTE to allow the civilians to leave, and assured the safety and security of civilians who did so. Government of India has extended humanitarian assistance to civilians in two batches so far.

External Affairs Minister emphasized the need to find a peacefully negotiated political solution to the conflict acceptable to all communities,including the Tamil community,and urged the Government of Sri Lanka to fully implement the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan constitution.